



# Naturalist Notes



Plant propagation work day in December 2022. Thanks to Liberty Johse for the photos.

**HOUSTON HUMANE  
SOCIETY TEXAS  
WILDLIFE  
REHABILITATION  
COALITION**

If you find any wild animal in need of help, call the hotline at 713-468-8972 for assistance.

**CHAPTER MEETINGS  
WILL BE IN PERSON IN  
2023**

Monthly chapter meetings will be at the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center on the first Thursday of each month, unless otherwise announced.

**MEMORIAL PARK LAND  
BRIDGE OPENS FEB 11<sup>TH</sup>**

The 'Biggest Picnic in Texas' will open the land bridge Feb 11<sup>th</sup>. Free picnic baskets from HEB while supplies lasts, food and beverages for purchase, self-guided tours.

Please do not bring glass containers.

A shuttle from Lot H (1643 Memorial Drive) as well as public transportation are options in addition to the limited parking.

## Witnessing Morning

I watched the sun soak  
the day into being  
through branches of cedar trees.  
Standing nearly motionless beneath  
a waning moon at dawn,  
I listened to a whirl of woodpeckers  
tumbling above me,  
debating matters of destiny  
and decorum  
across the trees.

Though mainly red-bellied,  
a pileated woodpecker  
also swooped among them,  
red crest jaunty in the sun.  
The blue jays, too,  
with matters to discuss  
and disagreements to settle,  
flashed in and out  
between bursts of black  
and white and red.

I knelt then on faded green moss  
to discover delicate and surprising  
ribbons of frost flowers there,  
a chancy beauty among the cold  
stones.

This is where life is,  
I thought.

May we remember that.

May we remember how much spins  
above, below, and around us  
every day.

May we allow ourselves to step away  
from the pervasive rectangles  
of approval and discord in our hands  
and step into seeing, living,  
and being here.

May we remember who we are  
beneath wings and moon  
on a broad and beautiful earth,  
capable of holding us all.

Open hands, curious eyes,  
soft hearts,  
the rising sun reaching out  
to gently touch our shoulders  
with a reminder  
that we, too,  
belong.

Molly Remer

<http://patreon.com/goddessmagic>

## Next Awards Meeting March

Our next awards meeting is Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>. You must enter your hours by Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup> and send an email to the Board using [boardmembers@txgcmn.org](mailto:boardmembers@txgcmn.org) to receive your awards. Let us celebrate everything you're accomplishing!

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## Chapter Dues are Overdue

Annual Gulf Coast Master Naturalist Chapter dues for calendar year 2023 are \$21.00 and were due by January 1, 2023. If dues are not paid by January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, you will lose access to recording your hours in VMS.

Just a reminder, we changed last year from \$20 to \$21 to make dues the same whether paying online or other. If you know of a member that does not use their chapter email or who may not see this message, please share this with them.

We strongly encourage you to pay your dues online following the directions below. If you do want to mail your payment, please mail a check to the P.O. Box address below.

-- ONLINE: On our website, <https://txmn.org/gulfcoast/>, select the Current Members tab, and "Pay Dues" button and follow the prompts. After clicking the button, you will have an option to pay by credit card or your Paypal account. You do NOT need to have a Paypal account to pay with a credit card. Dues processed online will be \$21.00, which covers our processing fee.

-- BY MAIL: GCMN, P.O. BOX 273087, Houston, TX 77277.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sheryl Mills

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## Visiting Green Spaces Associated with Lower Medication Use

Researchers in Finland found that increased number of visits to urban green spaces was associated with reduced frequency of psychotropic, antihypertensive and asthma medication use. This association did not depend on socioeconomic status.

On the other hand, simply seeing green and blue spaces through a window was not associated with decreased medication use.

The full study is available at <https://oem.bmj.com/content/oemed/early/2023/01/05/oemed-2022-108491.full.pdf>.

## ORGANISM OF THE MONTH

### WHITE IBIS ( EUDOCIMUS ALBA)

The White Ibis is a wetland bird often associated with hurricanes, as they are often the last to leave dangerous areas and the first to return. It is sensibly named for its brilliant white plumage and black wingtips, though younger birds retain their brown feathers for about a year. They use their scarlet legs and curved bill to probe shallow waters for crustaceans and other small marine life. When hatched, their bills are straight – they don't start to curve downward until 2 weeks old.

Though they are not strictly monogamous, male White Ibises are quite protective, defending their nest and female from other males. It's common for the males to steal nesting materials, usually sticks and reeds, from each other while the females are busy building.

White Ibises are common during all seasons in our area, often gathering in groups in shallow waters of any type: marshes, mudflats, lakes, mangroves, swamps, marshes, and even manmade bayous. You might even spot an egret close by, waiting for a free dinner stirred up by an ibis!

Liberty Johse

Sources: [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org); [Audubon.org](http://Audubon.org)



Photo by Doug Greenberg taken in Pearland, TX



### Washed Ashore Art Exhibit

Artist Boat is hosting a series of 20+ sculptures across Galveston Island through March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The exhibit aims to educate the public about the hazards of plastic pollution in the world's waterways.

Go to

<https://www.visitgalveston.com/blog/washed-ashore-art-to-save-the-sea-traveling-exhibit-in-galveston-texas/> for further information

